

This record is a partial extract of the original cable. The full text of the original cable is not available.

UNCLAS SECTION 01 OF 02 BAGHDAD 005067

SIPDIS

STATE FOR INR/R/MR, NEA/PPD, NEA/PPA, NEA/AGS, INR/IZ, INR/P

E.O. 12958: N/A

TAGS: [OPRC](#) [KMDR](#) [KPAO](#) [IZ](#)

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: IRAQI GOVERNMENT, DECEMBER 15th
ELECTION, TRANSPARENCY; BAGHDAD

SUMMARY: The major theme of today's editorials was
Thursday's parliamentary election.

Analysis: While the majority of the day's editorials
addressed the election the treatment varied greatly
depending on the nature of the press. Independent Al-
Fourat's editorial, "My Country, My Country" hailed the role
of Iraqis in their new democracy and emphasized the unity of
the country. Allawi's mouthpiece Baghdad had the editorial,
"Iyad Allawi and His Vision for National Unity" which lauded
his plans for the country's future.

The Hezb'allah in Iraq newspaper, Al-Bayna's editorial, "The
Purple Revolution, the Paupers' Revolution" celebrated the
success of the election and condemned those who questioned
its integrity.

Independent Al-Sabah Al-Jadeed's, "Hard Times" addressed
unemployment and criticized government officials for being
preoccupied with personal interests. The Ad-Dawa party's
eponymous newspaper published an editorial, "This Is How a
Loving Person Addresses Iraqis," praising Al-Ja'afari for
his speech to Iraqis during a visit to Najaf. Al-Bayyan,
also affiliated with Ad-Dawa, published, "The Aftermath of
Victory" which examined the role of the United Iraqi
Alliance following a successful election. END SUMMARY.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

- [1A. "Lining Up" \(As-Sabah, 12/20\)](#)
- [1B. "Comprehension" \(Al-Adala, 12/20\)](#)
- [1C. "Post Elections" \(Al-Ittihad, 12/20\)](#)
- [1D. "A Result of the Elections: A Fivefold Increase in Fuel
Prices" \(Al-Mada, 12/20\)](#)
- [1E. "What Follows the Elections?" \(Ad-Dustoor, 12/20\)](#)

SELECTED COMMENTARIES

[1A. "Lining Up"](#)
(As-Sabah - Iraqi Media Network, government financed, pro-
coalition, published this front-page editorial by Muhammad
Al-Shaboot that dealt with how religious, ethnic and
sectarian divisions dominated the elections. In part the
editorial reads)

"Sectarian and ethnic lineups in the last election were far
more evident than the previous one held in January--then
you could have found Arabic names on Kurdish lists and
Sunnis on Shiite lists with a few Christians here and there.
Matters have changed in the last election with almost
entirely Kurdish and Shiite lists, with other new lists
based solely on religion and ethnicity, which explains the
increasing number of political entities from 112 in January
to 300 in the last election. Some might find this ethnic and
sectarian division in the elections appealing, while some
may not, but the problem remains that this trend might not
be the best way to form the basis of a modern state."

[1B. "Comprehension"](#)
(Al-Adala, affiliated with SCIRI, led by Abdul Aziz Al-
Hakim, no bias, published this page-three editorial by Dr.
Ali Khalif. The columnist stressed the need for Iraq to
flourish once again and urged citizens not to complain about
the government's decisions for the sake of the country. In
part the editorial reads)

"After the major political changes in the new Iraq,
undoubtedly there are major economic changes that will
follow this political achievement. The Iraqi economy has
suffered a lot due to the errant policies of the former
regime; there wasn't even a real economy that could maintain
the state and citizen's rights. Iraq is heading towards a
market economy and will be open to investment. Citizens will
have a real role in building their country's economy and
Iraqi citizens will comprehend this in the near future after
they get rid of the remainders of the former regime and
begin dealing with the new Iraq full of thoughts and
ambitions."

1C. "Post Elections"

(Al-Ittihad - affiliated with the PUK, led by Jalal Talabani, pro-coalition, published this front-page editorial promoting accord among the political blocs, especially in this sensitive post-election stage. In part the editorial reads)

"The Elections are over and perhaps in less than a week the IECI will announce the results. The major blocs will begin negotiating with each other to agree to a new political map for Iraq, the first stage of which will be electing a president, two vice-presidents and the formation of a new government that will run the country's affairs for the next four years. Preliminary results show the Kurdish Alliance will be a strong bloc in the Iraqi parliament and it will negotiate to shape the governmental and parliamentary map. Consensus is one of the primary Iraqi principles and electing a political Kurdish figure for one of the two senior ministerial posts is one of the first Kurdish priorities."

1D. "A Result of the Elections: A Fivefold Increase in Fuel Prices"

(Al-Mada - independent, no bias, published this page-three editorial by Rahman Al-Jawari that dealt with the government's unpopular decision to increase fuel prices. In part the editorial reads)

"Iraqi's ink-stained fingers didn't have time to dry, nor did their feet have the chance to recover from long distance walks to polling stations before receiving the gift of fuel prices increasing--fivefold. This decision was made three days prior to the election, and was put into effect three days after Election Day to add a new burden to the elected government and a new concern for people who already fear for their future in the era of a new democratic government. Iraqis should be glad as they float over a lake of oil but can't provide petrol for their vehicles, kerosene for their heaters or meet their children's needs."

1E. "What Follows the Elections?"

(Ad-Dustoor - independent, no bias, published this back page editorial by Hashim Hassan that questioned the likely competence of the new government and whether it will serve the public's interest. In part the editorial reads)

"Millions of Iraqis participated in the elections to confirm their commitment to democracy that claimed many lives along its path; until now the fruits of those sacrifices have been harvested by others who monopolize parliamentary seats and divide ministries and embassies leaving the people with no idea of what is happening. We have the right to question what will follow the election and what kind of struggle will ensue to seize government posts. Will the interests of Iraq and the people be the basis of power sharing or will we see incompetent ministers and officials lacking the lowest level of required qualifications?"

KHALILZAD